

THE SCRIPTURAL GROUNDS FOR SECESSION  
FROM THE UNION.

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A SERMON,

DELIVERED BY

REV. LUCIUS CUTHBERT, JR.,

AT AIKEN, S. C., DEC. 16, 1860.

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PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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CHARLESTON.  
WELCH, HARRIS & CO  
1861.

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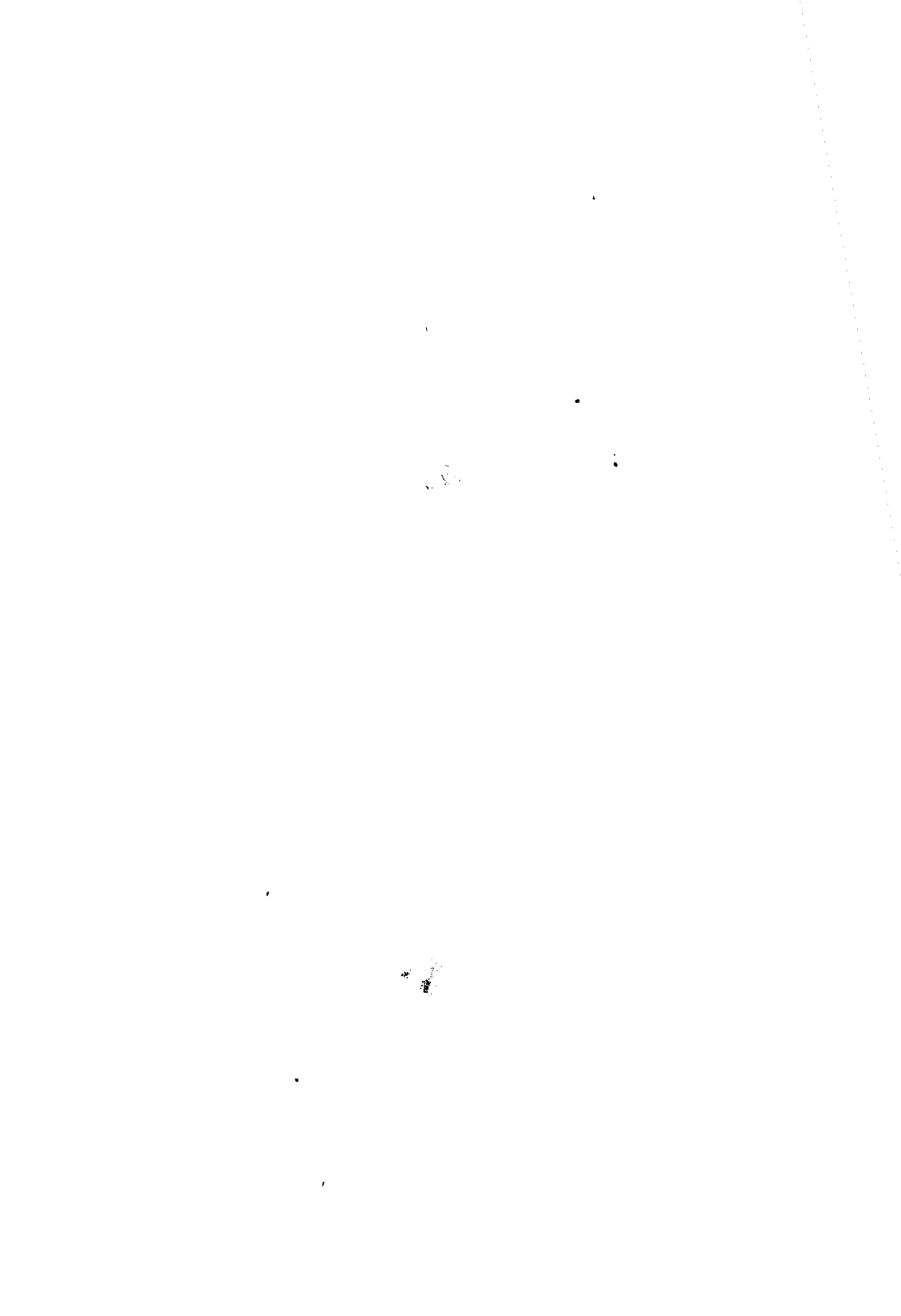
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## C O R R E S P O N D E N C E .

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REV. LUCIUS CUTHBERT.

DEAR SIR:—Believing that the sermon delivered by you on last Sabbath, at the Baptist Church, is well calculated to promote the great objects for which it was designed, we do hereby respectfully request a copy of the same for publication, feeling satisfied that by so doing, you will greatly oblige many who were deprived of hearing it.

Very respectfully,

THOS. E. CHAPMAN,  
W. A. MERITT,  
JOHN N. MIMS,  
WILLIAM G. MOOD.  
G. D. MIMS.

*Aiken, Dec. 17, 1860.*

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AIKEN, DEC. 18, 1860.

MESSRS. CHAPMAN *and others.*

DEAR SIR:—Your communication came to hand on yesterday. If the publication of the discourse will be of any use, you are welcome to the manuscript. In complying with your request, I have written it out as accurately and faithfully as my notes and memory would permit. And should you observe any slight variation between the sermon as delivered and the sermon as published, you will accord to it the indulgence of an extemporaneous effort. I am persuaded, however, that the sum and substance are the same.

With much respect.

I remain yours, &c.,

LUCIUS CUTHBERT, JR.

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# THE SCRIPTURAL GROUNDS OF SECESSION FROM THE UNION.

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“ In the name of our God we will set up our banners.”  
PSALM XX. 5.

NEARLY every paper, that we read, announces the erection of some beautiful banner, with a Palmetto and lone Star, waving in the breeze. Wherever we go, the eye beholds this patriotic sight. In every city and village and hamlet thro' the State, men are setting up their banners. Let us examine the meaning of this thing. And, as we have already learned, from other sources, the philosophy and the politics of this subject, our present investigation will be confined to the religious aspect of the case. With one premise we proceed.

It has not been, without some degree of hesitation, that we have ventured to introduce this subject into the sanctuary. For at the first, a feeling of uncertainty was experienced, whether or not a discourse upon this absorbing topic would be embraced within the province of the pulpit. But we are free to confess that these scruples vanished away, upon second thought and mature reflection. And now we feel it to be our duty as your religious teacher, with the Bible as our guide, to discover and declare the scriptural grounds upon which South Carolina is setting up her banners and preparing to march out of the Union.

To express the whole matter plainly and briefly, we remark, *that our State is about to secede, in defence and maintenance of the institution of Slavery.* If this institution be unscriptural, the sooner we abandon it,

the better. But if it be scriptural, we are perfectly justifiable in sustaining it. The scientific may employ the argument of color and constitution. The agriculturalist may prefer the argument of climate. But the Christian must invariably refer and defer "to the law and to the testimony." And in the language of Gamaliel to "the men of Israel," we say to the enemies of Slavery at the North, and everywhere, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:"

"But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

My reasons in favor of the proposed action of the State, are the following, and you will remember that I am speaking as a Christian minister.

I. "In the name of the God" of *justice* "we will set up our banners." For many a long weary year, the South has been enduring wrongs at the hands of the North, in reference to this identical thing. In unmeasured terms they have abused and villified us because we were slaveholders. And have classed us in the black category of murderers and men-stealers, and adulterers. They begin in infancy to poison the minds of their children by infamous prints and pictures, and extravagant lessons. While this unceasing work of wickedness is carried on among the masses by the tract or political pamphlet, the press is prostituted, the pulpit is profaned and the platform is perverted by empty platitudes and rapid declamation against the enormous sin (?) of the South.

But we are willing to let them rail on, provided their pious rage expend itself in impotent fury. But they have carried out their unholy principles, and have robbed us of our property. And when the Constitution of our country, for the safety of the South, enacts the fugitive Slave law, they violate this enactment and render it a dangerous experiment, by their



State fines and imprisonment, for the master to recover his property. Yea, further, they have incited our slaves to insurrection, by incendiary documents and abolition emissaries. And scarcely a year ago they entered a border State, sword in hand, with the view of exciting to rebellion and ruin. They have despoiled us of our equitable rights in the common territories and have defiantly declared that, "thus far" shall we come and "no farther." And at last, to cap the climax, they have elected a man, as President of these United States, who is pledged to his party, to confine Slavery within its present limits and to carry on, and carry out "an irrepressible conflict" with slave labor. But in the name of the God of *justice*, "we will not have this man rule over us" And we appeal to the examples of Holy Writ to sustain us in this decision. When Hagar fled from the presence of her mistress, the Angel commissioned her to return. And when Onesimus presented himself in the presence of Paul as a fugitive slave, the Apostle immediately restored him with a letter to Philemon. (But the North disregard this.) When the Israelites had suffered many grievances at the hands of Pharaoh, God heard their cries and vindicated their rights, by delivering his chosen people from injustice and oppression. (But we will remember this.) And when Rehoboam placed heavy burthens upon his people, God sent Jeroboam to head the secession of the ten tribes. But God is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," and his immutable justice will warrant us at this time in throwing off the Northern yoke, which has become intolerable. Any thing is preferable to an unmanly submission to wrong and an unworthy degradation. And we say calmly, but *decidedly*, that we will rise up to a man and resist the oppressive sway of a Black Republican administration. A political heresy that is black in its origin—black in its practices—but blacker far

in its blighting and blasting effect upon our government. We believe that our State, like a strong man, will stand up to her rights, and assert them at any and every peril. We will dare to do our duty, so help us God!

II. "In the name of the God" of *Revelation*, "we will set up our banners."

From Genesis to Revelation we read of the Institution of Slavery. It commenced with Noah's curse upon Ham. "And he said, cursed be Canaan: a *servant* of servants shall he be unto his brethren." And this curse, like the curse of eating bread in the sweat of our face, has been overruled for good. A good, not only of a temporal character to the slave in our midst, but of a spiritual and moral nature.

"And Abraham said unto his eldest *servant* of his house," &c. Again,— "Now Sarai, Abraham's wife, bare him no children: and she had an *handmaid*, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar." These passages show that slavery existed at a very early period, and that it was practiced by the most eminent of God's children.

"And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were *born* in his house, and all that were *bought* with his money."

"And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver and gold, and *menservants* and *maidservants*, and camels and asses." We learn from these quotations, that property in slaves is recognized by the Bible and that this property is either procured by birth or money.

Passing over many more texts of Scripture, which prove that God permitted the institution of slavery, and that Abraham, the father of the faithful, was a slaveholder, if you will recall to mind the last of the ten commandments, you will see that slavery is incor-

porated even in the Sacred Decalogue. As if God would thus throw around this institution the sanctity of law.

But our opponents constantly aver, that God allowed the Jews to hold slaves, in the same way, as He permitted them to do other things, which we do not now justify. While this objection may be removed by showing the difference between slavery and the other rites practiced, we will simply remark, that the New Testament sets its seal of permission and approval to this self same institution. Now of no other obsolete ceremony or practice does it speak in favor or even extenuation. And if the Old and New Testament be our rule of faith and practice, then we remark, that slavery is right.

Jesus speaks of a faithful servant—of an evil servant—of an unprofitable servant. But surely if slavery be sin, we cannot conceive of a faithful sin—of a good sin!

The Apostle Paul finds it existing in his day, and so far from condemning it, (though he condemned sin in every shape and form, and even denounced it before Felix,) takes especial care to lay down certain regulations respecting it. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, sixth chapter and from the fifth to the seventh verses, he not only exhorts servants to be obedient to their masters, but expressly calls this obedience “the will of God.” In His Epistle to the Colossians, third chapter and twenty-second verse, He reiterates the very same precept. While He insists upon this identical duty in His short letter of only three chapters to Titus.

The Apostle Peter in like manner proclaims the obligation of servants to their masters, and in his first Epistle, second chapter and eighteenth verse, enjoins subjection of servants to masters, whether they be “gentle or forward.”

We make one more reference to the Bible in support of our position. And we intend to read you the first five verses of first Timothy, sixth chapter. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed."

"And they that have believing masters let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort."

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;"

"He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings."

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

From the foregoing citations we deduce the following facts: Slavery is a scriptural institution, and the faithful discharge of the obligations growing out of this relation is a part of Christianity. Any other doctrine is declared to be unsound and unwholesome, and we are authorized by God himself, to withdraw from those who teach and practice otherwise.

Christian brethren and friends! we stand upon a solid foundation, when we are entrenched upon this rock. And before our enemies can drive us hence, they must put a false interpretation upon all of those passages which have been adduced. They must wrest the sacred oracle to their own shame and confusion. Yea, they must eradicate this immoveable truth and establish a "higher law."

But our hearts are animated by a glorious principle

in the struggle, which I believe will shortly commence. The flame of patriotism will be enkindled by the fire of Religious enthusiasm, and we will be invincible against any foe and any force which may be arrayed against us.

The Israelites entered Canaan and subdued the nations of the land; and they did this, not so much on account of their superior numbers, as of their religious convictions. And we read in Scottish story, that when the covenanters went forth to battle, they first engaged in prayer to God and sent up their praises to the most High in singing the Psalms of David, until their green glens and grey hills resounded with their inspiring songs. And then, they rushed forth to the contest, "conquering and to conquer."

Before God and the world, I firmly believe our cause to be sacred. And we can bow down to our maker with open Bibles before us and implore His blessing upon this undertaking. And when the time comes (but may God in mercy avert that day!) to meet our Northern brethren in dreadful conflict, we will commit our bodies and souls into the hands of our Creator, and will either do or die.

III. "In the name of the God" of *Battles* "we will set up our banners."

We can invoke His assistance and depend upon His almighty arm, because we are guided and governed by the teachings of the Bible in seceding from the Union. When King Asa depended upon God, he triumphed over the King of Ethiopia. But when he trusted to Benhadad, he suffered an ignominious defeat. Always be assured that your source of strength is in God. And this assurance will fortify your souls against any misgiving and arm you with a power perfectly irresistible. There was something more than mere supposition in the belief which the Indian entertained toward Washington. More than once he aimed his faithful arrow at the Father of our Country, but

every time that arrow missed its mark. And the wonder of the savage never ceased, until he happened to see Washington, in some solitary spot, engaged in prayer to God, in behalf of the Revolution. I tell you, in all candour, the man is to be feared, who lives in prayerful dependence upon the Lord, who derives his strength and succor direct from Heaven.

But I must conclude with one reflection :

There is another banner "which we will set up in the name of our God." And this banner is the Cross of Christ. Upon its blood stained folds are inscribed *Deliverance from Sin, and Redemption from Satan.* Let us fight under the Captain of our Salvation and "endure hardships as good soldiers." Let us wage a war of eternal opposition to every form of evil. Christian soldier! arm yourself for this spiritual warfare with the panoply of God," and battle manfully in the cause of religion, until "every knee shall bow," "and every tongue confess that He is Lord." And the time will shortly come, when this banner will wave triumphantly from every hill top and mountain peak. When it shall float joyously over the ruins of sin and the strongholds of Satan. And proclaim to all the world the blessed news of its universal conquest.

Sinner, render your allegiance to this Redeemer; and then, you will be freed from the oppression of guilt and the thralldom of evil. Then will you "stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ can make you "free." Roll on blessed day, when every one will become a follower of Jesus Christ! When we shall no more hear "of wars and rumors of war!" When there shall be no longer any angry strife among the children of men! But when peace shall every where prevail! When "the wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them!"